

NOAA CSC Training Policy

Introduction

This document outlines the training policy of the NOAA Coastal Services Center. It will acquaint the reader with the Center's course offerings, training facility, and our guidelines for developing, distributing, and delivering course material.

Mission

NOAA is the nation's principal advocate for coastal and ocean stewardship with a mission to conserve and wisely manage the nation's coastal and marine resources. The Coastal Services Center serves as a catalyst for achieving this mission, operating under the authority of 16 U.S.C. 456c, which authorizes NOAA to provide assistance to support coastal zone management. In fulfilling our mission, we look to our constituents, the coastal resource management community, to set our agenda.

Center training courses build the capacity of organizations involved with managing and protecting coastal resources. Other providers – academic, private, and commercial – offer training in areas of interest to our customer base. The Center does not duplicate these efforts. Rather, we work to fill gaps in available training, tailoring our courses specifically for the coastal management community. Our courses focus on selected topics and offer hands-on experience applying relevant methods and techniques to specific coastal management issues, often drawing from NOAA experiences.

Participants

- The target audience for all Center products and services is the coastal resource management community. Within this community, the target audience depends on the content of the individual course. The primary audience represents
 - State- and local-level coastal managers
 - NOAA and other federal agencies' field-based coastal managers
 - Nongovernmental organizations involved with coastal management
 - International project partners
- The primary audience includes
 - Science and technology professionals
 - Education, outreach, and extension professionals
 - Planners and community development and hazard specialists
 - Enforcement, compliance, and permitting specialists
- The Center does not try to compete with private business or industry. All Center training is developed within the specific context of coastal management using relevant coastal content and examples. The target audience does not include the general public. Standard courses using ESRI products are open only to Center project partners. Through the needs assessment process, courses available via private industry are identified and evaluated for coastal relevancy. The Center does not develop redundant courses.
- The Center strives to reach as many coastal management professionals as possible. To this end, all courses in the coastal management and building process skills categories are available to be taught off-site at the request of a local host (see the Remote Training Requirements section above). Some geospatial technology course maybe taught at remote sites. Please contact the Center for more details.

Materials

- Who Receives Training Materials

Materials are distributed to those people who are registered and attend a Center workshop or course. Materials are not intended as stand-alone instruments and are designed to complement the delivery of workshop or course material. On occasion, materials may be shared with outside professionals who have an interest in resource management education. In this event, materials may be provided and used with

permission from the Center. All materials developed by the Center should be acknowledged as such.

- **Availability**
Current versions of training materials are available in the Center library. They may be circulated through the normal library loan process. Any use of materials by those outside of the Center is with permission from and acknowledgement of the Center.
- **Archiving**
Training materials are archived in the Center library when major changes in content occur.
- **Quality Assurance**
Development of any Center training material requires a content development team in consultation with a Coastal Learning Services (CLS) staff member with expertise in educational design. All courses are tested with an internal audience to assess effectiveness. Technical editing and format design of course materials follow the procedures set forth by the Center's communications program. Whenever possible, CLS produces training materials to ensure consistency in materials and course presentations.
- **Certificates of Completion**
Upon completion of a course, defined as participating in 90 percent or more of the class, participants will be eligible to receive a certificate of completion that states the course title, number of course hours, and the date of completion. The certificate is issued by the Center and signed by the instructor(s) with the exception of Environmental Systems Research Institute-certified courses, which award an official ESRI course certificate as dictated by the company's policy.

Instructors

- **Course Instruction**
 - Instructors for specific classes are selected based on their experience and expertise in the subject matter and have experience in teaching and public speaking. They also have experience applying their expertise to coastal resource management issues. On occasion the Center will hire select outside instructors to deliver training material.
 - For ESRI courses, the instructor must be authorized by ESRI and be in good standing with the ESRI Authorized Training Program.
- **Outside Instructors Teaching Center Material**
 - All non-Center instructors are required to follow the Center standards set forth in this document.
 - Non-Center instructors must be observed by Center staff in a teaching environment prior to teaching Center material.
- **Instructor Certification**
 - Center classes do not require any type of certification on the part of the instructor, excepting ESRI courses. Acceptance of an instructor's capabilities by Center management constitutes Center authorization to teach a course. To teach an ESRI course, the instructor must be authorized through the ESRI Authorized Training Program and be in good standing.
- **Continuing Education for Instructors**
 - The Center requires that instructors stay up-to-date in the fields in which they teach.
 - All instructors are required to attend a conference or workshop (ESRI User Conference, American Society for Training and Development, etc.) at least once a year that directly pertains to the area in which they deliver content material.
 - All instructors are required to take training at least once every three years on content delivery methods (facilitation, public speaking, etc.) in order to help them better deliver the material in their classes.
 - All instructors are required to stay current with any technology that is part of the content they teach. Instructors are required to attend classes or workshops on the new technology whenever a major revision or new version is released.
 - Program managers will ensure these continuing education requirements are met by each of their instructors.

Content

- The Center offers training in three distinct areas: geospatial technology, coastal management, and process skills. Delivery methods include instructor-led or facilitated courses held at the Center, at local host sites, and at conferences and meetings. In addition, the Center strives to provide content via distance learning channels such as Web-based courses and CD-ROM or DVD tutorials.
- The Center bases the development of new course materials on an identified need present in the coastal resource management community. The Center conducts a survey on a triannual basis that acts as a gauge of our customers' needs. If there is a large number of requests for training in a particular topic (e.g., new technology), the Center then undertakes a study to determine if there is an existing source of training available, either elsewhere in the coastal management community or in the private sector. If no other sources of training exist to meet the expressed need, the Center then may create course content to meet the need if the resources are available. Typically, the Center revises or creates a new class every two to three years.
- All Center course content undergoes stringent quality assurance testing including an extensive editing and review process. All material is tested on an internal panel of experts prior to being included in the Center's course catalog.
- Extensive performance monitoring occurs for both the training content and course delivery. This process occurs throughout the life cycle of a course. A needs assessment is conducted prior to the preparation of any course content. Students complete evaluations after each class in order to provide the Center with valuable suggestions for improvements. The Center also sends out follow-up evaluations to students to determine if the training has met its long-term goals.
- The Center does not routinely teach courses developed by other entities, with the exception of ESRI-developed courses. Partnerships may be developed in which collaborative course development and implementation would be considered (see the Partnerships section below).

Site/Facilities

- Center Facilities
 - The Center is home to a state-of-the-art computer lab equipped with 18 high-end desktop computers and flat-screen monitors and several conference rooms of various sizes and configurations that can be equipped with computers, Internet connections, projectors, screens, white boards, and other materials necessary for successful training sessions and meetings. It is also possible to set up tele- and video conferencing. www.csc.noaa.gov/training/facilities/
 - The Center also has several rooms that can be used for non-computer-dependent courses. These rooms vary in size and included infrastructure.
 - All training facilities are accessible and all reasonable accommodations will be provided to those who require assistance.
- Scheduling (For internal purposes)
 - Background

This policy addresses scheduling of the Center's various rooms and the criteria for priority use. Individuals who plan for and hold meetings are also responsible for addressing the logistical support needs of the meeting attendees and presenters.
 - General Policy
 1. Only Center staff can reserve rooms. External partner meetings that do not include Center staff should be referred to the Coastal Learning Services office.
 2. Rooms are scheduled by adding them as "resource" to a new proposed meeting in Oracle Calendar.
 3. Oracle will directly confirm to the requestor all meeting facilities.
 4. "Regularly scheduled" activities can only be scheduled two months in advance. Once reserved, the internal groups should remain flexible and open to being asked to relocate. This is particularly important when there is significant set-up required between meetings or video conferencing is required.

- Priority Use of Conference Rooms 201 A, B, and C
 1. Large meetings scheduled three months in advance. Please only schedule the amount of space required (e.g., all three rooms for meetings with over 50 participants).
 2. Client/partner meetings scheduled more than two months in advance.
 3. Internal meetings and training scheduled more than two months in advance.
 4. Regularly scheduled meetings and training.
 5. On-demand client/partner meetings with minimal advance notice will be scheduled on a space-available basis.

The video conference equipment that was in 201-B is now a mobile unit that should work in any room. Video conferences in Room 201 B (when the Director's Office conference room is already scheduled with another video conference) may pre-empt internal meetings as necessary.

If questions or scheduling conflicts arise, the Coastal Learning Services office will make the decision based on the above criteria, with Director's Office consultation if necessary.

- Priority Use of Training Lab Room 147
 1. Training for clients scheduled more than two months in advance.
 2. Internal training scheduled more than two months in advance.
 3. Meetings requiring use of multiple computers.

If questions or scheduling conflicts arise, the Coastal Learning Services office will make the decision based on the above criteria, and with Director's Office consultation if necessary.

- Priority Use of Director's Office Conference Room 231
 1. Director and/or deputy director video conferences.
 2. Other staff video conferences.
 3. Director and/or deputy director meetings.
 4. Other staff meetings.

If questions or scheduling conflicts arise, the Director's Office secretary will make the decision based on the above criteria, and with Director's Office consultation if necessary.

- Frequency (Scheduled vs. On-Demand)

There are a limited number of courses scheduled each year at the Center. Coastal resource management agencies may request that the Center provide training at a site closer to their offices, but all requests will only be considered if the resources and trainers are available. In addition, requests for local training should be made at least two months in advance for coastal management training and process skills courses. Requests will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis. Courses are often booked a year in advance. Requests for geospatial technology courses at local sites need to be made one to two years in advance to be considered.
- Registration
 - The Center strives to post all upcoming training courses on its external Web page well in advance www.csc.noaa.gov/training/. Classes that are organized to meet client demand may not be posted on the Web site. Contact information for any Center course is listed on the Center's training web page. Cost for classes taught at the Center cover materials and catering.
 - Registration for courses held at remote sites is handled by the local host. The local host is free to set fees that cover the cost of holding the course including, but not limited to, materials, meeting space, refreshments and/or food, etc. For more information, see the Remote Training Requirements section of this document.
 - A participant's space in a course is not reserved until payment has been received if required. Confirmation of the participant's reserved enrollment will be sent when payment is received or enrollment is approved by lead instructor.

- No refunds can be given for those who are unable to attend, but a substitute may be sent.
- Facility Safety/Workplace Procedures
 - While at Center facilities, instructors are responsible for enforcing all applicable policies. All students will be informed of general Center facility policies as well as specific emergency evacuation plans, lab-specific policies (i.e., no food), nonhostile workplace guidelines, and security issues.
 - While delivering training away from the Center, instructors will work with the local host to ensure that all site procedures are clearly conveyed to participants.
- Food
 - For courses held at the Center, morning and afternoon breaks, as well as lunch, are provided to all students. The registration fee covers these costs. If there are under 10 participants in a course, the caterer may substitute box lunches for the normal hot meal. Accommodations will be made for participants with special dietary requirements. The Center also has vending machines available for student use. No food is permitted in the computer training lab but may be in other meeting rooms.
 - Catering is not provided for internal staff participating in courses at the Center.
 - For courses held away from the Center, the local host is responsible for providing refreshments.
 - Please note that training held at the Center qualifies for training under the Government Employees Training Act and meals provided are deemed necessary to obtain full benefit of the training.

Remote Training Requirements

- The Center will bring non-computer-dependent training workshops (coastal management training and process skills courses) to a community or region at the request of a local host resource management agency. The local host agrees to provide all the logistics and guarantees that there will be a minimum of coastal resource management participants. The minimum number varies depending on the course; contact the Center for more details.
 - In order to schedule a workshop, the local host must contact the Center a minimum of two months prior to the desired course date to make arrangements. The Center schedules non-computer-dependent off-site workshops in the order requests are received, assuming resources are available.
 - The local host may be asked to sign a training agreement that guarantees a minimum number of registered attendees for the training and that other training-specific requirements are fulfilled.
 - The Center will provide
 - Training materials
 - Course materials, including manuals, will be sent to the local host prior to the beginning of the workshop.
 - Course evaluations.
 - Training as described on the Center's Web site, www.csc.noaa.gov/training/
 - Trainer(s)
 - The number of trainers depends on the course being taught.
 - The Center will typically cover all costs associated with the trainers' travel and cost of producing materials.
 - Logistics for the local hosts include
 - Scheduling facilities appropriate for the training, including accommodations for special needs participants if required.
 - Creating and sending out invitations to target audiences
 - The Center will provide an agenda and work with the local host if the agenda needs to be modified.
 - The Center will work with the local host to ensure that all appropriate coastal resource management entities in the region are invited to the course.
 - In addition to the NOAA-related programs, the local host should invite its project partners.
 - Making hotel recommendations or blocking rooms if appropriate.
 - Making arrangements or recommendations for lunch and break refreshments.

- Providing audio/visual equipment and training supplies such as a data projector, screen, white board and markers, flip charts, name badges, etc. If the local host is unable to provide these, the Center can sometimes assist.
 - Identifying and contacting local guest presenters if necessary for the course.
- The Center is offering a very limited number of computer-dependent technology courses (geospatial technology courses) at remote sites. The Center works with existing partners to determine regional need and potential sites. Currently the Center offers the following classes remotely: Introduction to ArcGIS 1 and Coastal Applications Using ArcGIS, which are typically taught together in a four-day time period, Remote Sensing for Spatial Analysts, and Metadata. The local host guidelines below apply to these courses. For more information, visit the Center's training Web page at www.csc.noaa.gov/training/.
 - For Introduction to ArcGIS and Coastal Applications Using ArcGIS, the Center will provide
 - ESRI-authorized trainers to teach each class.
 - Manuals for students for each class. The local host will reimburse the Center for the cost of the manuals (\$175 per student).
 - A flyer that describes the course and can be used for advertising purposes.
 - Two free course packets (comprised of the ESRI and Coastal Applications manuals) to the local host to compensate for the host's responsibilities. The local host is free to provide these packets to whomever it chooses. Recipients of free training material packets should not be counted when determining if the minimum number of students has been enrolled, but should be considered when making arrangements for breaks and any lunches the host decides to have catered.
 - Up to 20 temporary licenses of ArcGIS for the duration of a course to any training lab that does not have access to the software. The day before the start of class, Center instructors will install the software and all data needed for course exercises. At the end of class, the instructors will uninstall the data and software and make every attempt to delete all files put on the computer during the course of the class.
 - For Metadata training, the Center will provide
 - Trainer(s) to teach each class.
 - Manuals for students for each class. The local host will reimburse the Center for the cost of the manuals (\$50 per student).
 - A flyer that describes the course and can be used for advertising purposes.
 - Two free course packets (manuals) to the local host to compensate for the host's responsibilities. The local host is free to provide this manual to whomever it chooses. Recipients of free training material should not be counted when determining if the minimum number of students has been enrolled, but should be considered when making arrangements for breaks and any lunches the host decides to have catered.
 - Any necessary software needed to complete the course (mp, cns, ArcGIS, etc.)
 - For Remote Sensing for Spatial Analysts, the Center will provide
 - Trainers to teach each class.
 - Manuals for students for each class. The local host will reimburse the Center for the cost of the manuals (\$75 per student).

- A flyer that describes the course and can be used for advertising purposes.
 - Two free course packets (manuals) to the local host to compensate for the host's responsibilities. The local host is free to provide these packets to whomever it chooses. Recipients of free training material packets should not be counted when determining if the minimum number of students has been enrolled, but should be considered when making arrangements for breaks and any lunches the host decides to have catered.
 - Any necessary software needed to complete the course (ArcGIS, Image Analyst, etc.)
- Logistics for the local host include
- Reserving and paying all costs for the facilities necessary for the successful completion of training as described below, including accommodations for special needs participants if required. For the Introduction to ArcGIS 1 and Coastal Applications Using ArcGIS courses, the facility will need to be reserved Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday will be used by the instructors to set up the lab and test all computers. Tuesday through Friday will be used to teach the classes. For remote sensing and metadata training, the facility will need to be reserved for three days, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The first day will be used to set up the lab with the remaining two days used to deliver the course. The local host should ensure that if the class minimum is not met, the use of the facility could be cancelled without penalty. The Center trainers are available to answer questions from the local host or facilities staff in order to ensure that lab facilities are adequate.
 - The local host is responsible for marketing, sending registration material, and for handling the registration process (i.e., receiving money, if applicable, and keeping track of number of seats available). The Center will work with the local host to ensure that all appropriate coastal resource management entities in the region are invited to the course. Student registration must be finalized four weeks prior to the start date of the course. For the Introduction to ArcGIS 1, Coastal Applications Using ArcGIS, and Remote Sensing for Spatial Analysts courses, Charleston Events, LLC, must receive payment from the local host two weeks prior to the first day of class.
 - The local host will greet the students on the morning of the first day of class and provide them with a name badge and course materials. The local host will orient the students to the site and make them aware of emergency procedures, restroom locations, nonhostile workplace rules, and any security procedures they should follow while in training. A brief time for the local host to present this information will be the first item on the course agenda.
 - In order to justify instructors' travel to off-site training, the local host must guarantee that a minimum number of seats will be filled for each class. For the Introduction to ArcGIS 1, Coastal Applications Using ArcGIS, and the Remote Sensing for Spatial Analysts courses, the minimum number of students is 12. For Metadata, the minimum number is 6. The minimum number of registrants must be verified four weeks prior to the scheduled class date and should not include the recipients of the complimentary training material packets provided to the local host. Because of the interactive nature of the classes, including small group work and discussion, registration is limited to 30 students involved in the field of coastal management. For the Introduction to ArcGIS 1 course, there may be no more than one student per computer.
 - The local host is requested to provide light refreshments (coffee, soda, etc.) for morning and afternoon breaks. If the host wishes to provide lunch as well, that cost may be recovered through an increased course enrollment

fee. The total number of students enrolled, including the recipients of the complimentary course manuals, should be used to figure the cost of food. It is not necessary to provide food for the instructors. The host is asked to ensure that the additional cost of food does not limit course participation. If the training facility is close to local eating establishments (within walking distance), it may be best to consider those in lieu of any additional registration fee.

- The Center expects and encourages the local host to recover all costs incurred. The host is free to set a fee for the course that will meet all of such costs. Local host costs will include payment for the computer lab and morning and afternoon breaks, payment for optional lunch or other food (see above), and reimbursement to the Center for any course manuals (\$100 per Introduction to ArcGIS manual, \$75 per Coastal Applications manual, and \$75 per Remote Sensing manual, except for the complimentary registrants' copies, which will be provided by the Center). While local hosts are free to set the price of the course, it is not intended that they make a profit. Regional training is provided by the Center as a way to help state and local agencies attend training that they might not otherwise be able to afford. Calculating the fee to cover the cost of the facilities should be done using the minimum number of paying students. If the actual class has more than the minimum number of students, the additional money made through registration fees will be the local host's to use to cover other expenses.
- Site Requirements
 - Computer Lab. The lab must have a minimum of 6 student computers for metadata training, a minimum of 12 student computers for all other computer-dependent courses, and 1 instructor computer.
 - Computer minimum requirements:
 - 800 megahertz Pentium processor
 - 512 megabytes of RAM
 - Windows 2000 or XP
 - Large hard drive
 - Instructor computer must have Microsoft PowerPoint installed
 - Internet Access. All computers need to have Internet access.
 - Projector. The instructor computer must be able to connect to a projector.
 - Screen. A screen on which to project PowerPoint slides is required.
 - Restroom. Restroom facilities must be accessible to all students.
 - Technical Support. Computer lab should have on-site technical support.
 - Printer/Plotter. While not required, printing devices for student use will enhance the training.
 - ArcGIS Software. ArcGIS software is not mandatory, but instructors must be able to load Center-provided software on each lab computer. If the lab has ArcGIS, the version must match the version being used by the instructors to teach the course (currently 9.0).

Partnerships

- The Center does not routinely teach courses developed by other entities, with the exception of ESRI-developed courses. The Center will, however, consider partnerships for collaborative course development and implementation.
- The Center may enter into agreements with other agencies that allow Center instructors to deliver course content at off-site facilities.
- Currently, Center-developed courses do not carry any continuing education units (CEUs) or credits. Upon completion of Center-developed courses, students receive a certificate that shows how many hours of training were involved in the course. In the future, CEUs may be available.